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Intercepts and Retrogrades: Your Hidden Powers

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Interceptions

Ms. Wickenburg began by stating that when she first researched intercepts, one book said that an intercepted sign is a quality you over-expressed in a past life and therefore it's being taken away from you. Another book stated just the opposite.

Some basic concepts

In a basic chart, each house has a cusp which is like a door that takes you into that life experience. We may have different internal reactions to those experiences, but basically we all have the same 12 houses in our chart – the 12 basic areas of our life that are out there for us to explore. The cusp is a critical point because it's a doorway into the next area of life. The sign on the house is what that room is going to look like. Toward each area of life we have a specific need or thing we're here to learn - the quality of the sign on the cusp. the personality characteristics come out of the need.

Aries, for example, shows where you are challenged through the experiences of everyday life to know you can do something on your own. Where do you want to do your own thing? Aries on the 1st house says, I am an individual. On the 2nd house, I am resourceful. On the 3rd house, I am intelligent, etc.

You don't necessarily come in knowing these things; they're what you're here to learn. Wherever you find Aries, you find an identity crisis: who am I? Do you find out who you are, or do you look for someone else to define you? So, each sign has a specific need out of which specific personality characteristics emerge. The house where the sign appears shows the area of life where the need is expressed.

The house ruler shows where you can go to meet the needs. You go out and gather experiences and bring them home to the house the planet rules. An intercepted sign has no house cusp—no doorway into the external experiences of life that fulfill its needs. The need the sign represents is just as strong.

If you have no interceptions, there is a smooth flow. With interceptions, things begin to get distorted. House systems break down in the Northern latitudes, because life breaks down when you get into the extreme latitudes.

Interceptions are environmental

An intercepted sign means there is a strong need in you but the environment you were born into did not have the kind of facilities you needed to feel you were developing the qualities of that sign. In fact, the outside world probably encouraged you to become the sign on the cusp of the house – and signs that are side by side are never compatible. So if you have Aries on the house cusp and Taurus intercepted in the house, the people around

you will encourage you to go out and initiate activities but won't give you the skills to get results from all the things you have initiated. So you feel confused.

What is unique about the chart, the houses, and intercepted signs is that they show the quality that no one really understood about you. Because the people who raised you didn't recognize that quality in you, they didn't know you needed those skills.

For example, if you have Gemini intercepted in a Taurus house, everyone is teaching you to be practical, get results. Inside you're full of questions and want to try all these different things, and you don't know how to do that. The Gemini part of you is not well-developed when it first starts to come out because it has never had any training. Everywhere you look, your Gemini is held back and so you feel stupid.

At least 50 percent of clients will have interceptions. Don't skip over the interceptions and don't look at them as a punishment. Once you come to terms with what your intercepted signs mean, they are the most creative parts of you. The reason is that they have not been highly conditioned by outside forces.

There are compensations for the interceptions in other parts of your chart, so you aren't wounded for your entire life. Transits will bring them out.

The same chart will have different interceptions with different house systems. Having tried all the house systems, Joanne has found that Placidus is the most all-encompassing.

Astrology is really a simplistic study. It deals with houses, signs, and planets, and how they all interact and interrelate with one another.

Interceptions and polarities

Intercepted signs occur in pairs. If Aries is intercepted, Libra will be too. The polarity operates in everything we do. It keeps us balanced between me and them, and vice versa. When you find intercepted signs, you have the dilemma of not being able to see those two parts of yourself very clearly. The two signs tend to operate against each other. They're not in constant awareness of the opposite that tends to come more naturally to other people. It takes longer in life to balance them out.

Aries/Libra intercepted - who am I/how do I learn to relate? In Aries, you're trying to learn to do your own thing without help from the environment. Libra is looking for a relationship but it can't successfully have one if it doesn't have a clear view of who it is individually. If Aries is intercepted, Pisces is on the house cusp. Pisces teaches you to have faith. Aries is the leap of faith that activates the creative vision. If Libra is intercepted, Virgo is on the cusp. You're trying to be balanced and equal and find harmony within an area of life where you've been taught to be critical. Trying to do both at the same time is confusing and jangly, but you can learn to value both.

Taurus/Scorpio intercepted - I need to have this for me/elimination. Taurus is where you learn to accumulate those things that give you comfort and a sense of worthiness.

Scorpio's role is to eliminate those things that hold us back from evolving. It deals a lot with trust. Libra on the cusp is about establishing cooperative partnerships, and Scorpio is about how you maintain those relationships. What parts of you do you need to examine and let go of so you can really merge with another person? Intercepted Taurus may be accumulating things, habits, and attitudes but not realizing that at some point those things become obsolete and must be recycled. Intercepted Scorpio may throw out too much and too soon. Scorpio's role is to regenerate but it needs to know what still has value before it just starts eliminating stuff.

Gemini/Sagittarius intercepted – accumulating/disseminating information. Gemini intercepted person is always asking questions but not really getting answers because the environment doesn't really connect with what you're talking about. Where Gemini is intercepted you may accumulate data without considering where the data fits. In the area of life ruled by Sagittarius, which is where you see the broader picture, your ideas can get so abstract that you can't verbalize them in a way that makes sense to anyone else. Your belief systems may not really fit the environment you've been brought up in. Look outside, look inside, but don't expect to find all the answers in the circle of people around you.

Cancer/Capricorn intercepted - belongingness in the inner and outer worlds. In the Cancer area of life, our role is to create a sense of emotional security. In Capricorn, the issue is social security, knowing where you belong in the outside world and feeling comfortable with that. If Cancer is intercepted, the world you were brought up in wasn't able to give you the kind of nurturing that made you feel safe. With Gemini on the cusp, you got information instead of security. If Capricorn is intercepted, Sagittarius on the cusp so you got a lot of lofty ideas that had no connection with what you actually needed to do to be successful.

These are polarities we all deal with every day of our lives, but they are emphasized with the interceptions.

Leo/Aquarius intercepted - Pride, self-confidence/the importance of the larger community to work together for progress, change. Leo is where you need to feel good about yourself, to have that sense of self-importance we all need. When Leo is intercepted, it's in a house ruled by Cancer, which is much more reserved and uncomfortable in the outside world. Leo intercepted is like there's an actor inside. You have to find that creative center through more unique avenues; look outside the box to get answers those around you can't give you. Aquarius is where we all want a sense of social connectedness and contribution to social reform. It's trapped in Capricorn's house. Maybe it will take a powerful transit to hit you over the head and bring out the Aquarius energy. Transits say, "do it now, do it now, do it now!" They bring out the energy that's been boxed up inside of you.

Virgo/Pisces intercepted - Critical, analytical/Don't worry about the details, just believe in the ideal. With Virgo intercepted, you're struggling to be more organized and analytical. You may have a weird sense of order that works only for you. Leo on the

cusp is saying just go out and be yourself, while you're inside taking yourself apart. With Pisces in the opposite house, you've forgotten how to put yourself back together again. Pisces is where you need to be happy with your dreams. The Aquarius house cusp is telling you to be more scientific or progressive; not to let your fantasies and ideals drag you down. But once you contact them, they don't drag you down; they make you whole.

Intercepted houses

With interceptions there will also be signs that "own" 2 houses, called intercepted houses. Watch the degrees. The house with the lesser degree is more evolved and will empower you. This house has been intercepted and dragged into the following sign.

For example, if you have the same sign on the 7th and 8th houses, relationships and regeneration go hand in hand. You get into relationships that constantly regenerate you. The problem is generally not getting into the relationship but maintaining the relationships.

If you see an intercepted sign, tell the client they have a hidden potential. They have the ability to bring to bring out that sign in a way that's uniquely their own.

Rulerships and stelliums

Say you have Gemini on the 7th. Mercury rules that house. Literally, it owns that territory. It may not be in that house and probably won't be. Its role is to go out and get information so that Gemini will know what it's talking about. Suppose Mercury is the 11th house, where it goes out and meets people and socializes and learns about the world. Gradually it gets the experience and knowledge it needs to have a personal relationship. Until Mercury does that, personal relationships in the 7th house probably won't be very successful. It's the experiences that the ruler goes out and accumulates in the house it occupies that actually come back to fulfill the needs of the house.

There may also be planets in the house. Mercury, the ruler, is the key that opens the door to that house. Once the door is open and you're involved in a relationship, you find all these things happening, depending on the planets you have in that house. The important thing to remember is that they rule other houses, too. When you have a stellium, all the other houses that these planets rule are dependent on your being able to work with other people in a harmonious way (7th house). You are trying to get 7th house experiences in order to fulfill the needs of the houses they rule. Obviously, they have to give something in return. The planets in the house offer something in return for the experiences they need. It doesn't matter whether or not you like what those planets have to offer. That's when the chart begins to come alive. You start to see that everything has a consequence and everything flows together, and everything in the chart means something unique.

Marc Edmund Jones used to say that everything in a chart means something different. There are many things that suggest something similar, but nothing takes away from anything else. For example, if you have no planets in mutable signs but many planets in cadent houses, does that compensate for the lack of flexibility shown by no mutables?

No! On the contrary: it means you don't have adaptability but you are constantly put into situations that require you to be adaptable. It's a double whammy: not only are you not adaptable, but you are constantly in situations that try to make you adaptable, and it's not working. Fortunately, things always progress into the next element, so you get some balance that comes out of just being alive.

If you have planets in an intercepted sign, then you have other areas of your life, described by the houses those planets rule, that are trying to get you to bring out the intercepted sign. They are trying to get you to be more than you were taught to be.

You may also have the ruler of one intercepted sign in the other intercepted sign. Look at this as a sign that you're supposed to do something uniquely your own. You're supposed to delve into things that aren't obvious. You will make mistakes along the way, because you have no experience and no textbook telling you how to do it, but the result can be incredibly creative and unique.

The thing to remember about intercepted signs is that it all goes back to the environment. Sometimes it can give you what you need and sometimes it can't. The cultures that traditionally use the equal house system are England and East India. Equal house systems work in cultures where the rule has traditionally been, "you are what you are told to be." You live within your caste.

Try doing an equal house chart beginning with your midheaven as a way of looking at your destiny without the environment. The reality, though, is that we're here to fulfill our destiny within the environment we're given.

Retrogrades

When a planet is retrograde it is closer to the Sun than at any other time in its cycle. It has been said that a retrograde planet is repressed or weakened, but actually it is closer to the earth than at any other time and much brighter than when it's direct. A retrograde planet is potent in your life.

Retrogradation means that things are repeated. With Venus retrograde, you always re-evaluate relationships. It's a magnet; we attract to ourselves the things and people we think we deserve. Venus says, "I want this, I want that," and Mars goes out to get it for her. If the communication is bad, as in a square between them, Mars may bring back something Venus didn't want. With squares we're constantly having to learn how to do something we don't know how to do yet.

When a planet is retrograde, it psychologically functions through its rulership in an opposite way.

Mercury wants information. Normally, Gemini goes out and gathers information and then brings it to Virgo to be analyzed. When Mercury is Rx, so much information is

coming in and it's in your face all the time that you can't really handle it all. You need to stop and process what's in front of you before going out for more.

Venus wants to be loved and appreciated. If your Venus is retrograde, your values and what you want to make you feel good are constantly an issue for you. Normally you'd learn to love yourself and know what you want through Taurus. When Venus is retrograde, it operates through Libra, so you look to others to give you a sense of your own personal worth. This generally doesn't work, so you then have to go back and do the Taurus thing.

Mars wants to do. When it's retrograde, you need to direct its energy in a less offensively Arian way. Before you impulsively lash out, you need to see how your action will affect the people around you, as a Scorpio would. Retrograde Mars should lead to rebirth and regeneration.

It's more significant when the personal planets are retrograde because they are who you innately are.

Jupiter and Saturn show how we need to learn to integrate with society. Jupiter is the part of us who wants more in life. When it's retrograde, you need to bring it through Pisces before the Sagittarius rulership really works. Instead of exploring many different beliefs and ideas and then determining what you believe, you need to find your source of inspiration within (Pisces) and as you expand your own ideals, you can reach out into the larger world. The philosophical structure of your childhood will need to be transformed in a significant way.

If Saturn is retrograde, boundary issues are huge for you. Normally, when Saturn is direct, you will go out and learn the rules and become responsible within those boundaries. Then when you go out into the next step, which is Aquarius, you'll have the foundation to make effective change and revolution. When Saturn is Rx, the structure isn't there for you. The only way you can find boundaries that work for you is to rebel against those that are already in place and don't work. Often Saturn Rx can't handle authority figures. They need to develop the Aquarian independence before they can recognize the importance of boundaries.

Uranus, Neptune and Pluto only have singular rulerships. They're all Rx about 50% of the time. The differences are subtle. Uranus is that part of us that just wants to be different, to be an individual. When it's direct, it knows how to do this in a way that works. Its purpose is to break the rules, get rid of obsolete structures, make something come to life. If it's Rx, Uranus is almost more Capricornian. In theory, if Saturn rules Capricorn and Aquarius, could it be that Uranus also rules Capricorn and Aquarius? If Uranus is direct, it would be the Uranus that breaks out of the existing structure and creates something new. If it's Rx, it might be better for these people to do the reflective thing, and go into an organization and try to change it from within.

The retrogrades are there to repair things that are broken. Generally there's some evidence, with retrogrades, that things need to be reassessed in some significant way.

Retrogrades by transit affect us all. Saturn is retrograde a lot of the time. It may not mean anything to us personally. But since it's a social planet, Saturn Rx means that all of us need to slow down, back up, re-evaluate, re-structure, make inner changes. Otherwise it becomes a control freak, rigid and unbending. If we try to plow ahead, the timing is wrong.

When Mercury is Rx, we need to deal with what's in front of us before we jump off into a new direction. Your car breaks down – odds are, it was showing signs of trouble before Mercury went Rx but you weren't paying attention. We need to stop and catch up with ourselves. Then when it goes direct we can move forward with less stress and more clarity of mind.

When Venus is Rx, it's a time to re-evaluate what we really want, for ourselves and in our relationships. Maybe what you wanted last year isn't what you want now. Or you meet your "perfect partner" and you find out that you hadn't clearly defined that that partnership might look like. Life needs change; otherwise it gets boring. It can be a healing time for our relationships.

If you have Venus Rx natively and Venus is Rx in the sky, you may feel a certain comfort but it's still not time to make a commitment. Take advantage of that time to reflect on your own inner nature.

When a Rx planet is in an intercepted house, a powerful part of you operates in ways that others may not understand. You may not have learned positive ways of expressing that energy. You have to go through a trial and error process until you find something that grabs you, and that will be outside the ordinary structure of life.

Neptune is that part of you that wants you to go to a place that doesn't exist in ordinary reality. It's where you get your spiritual food. Neptune is your ultimate creative part and it gets this creative energy from somewhere it can never define. When it's Rx, the idea of pure faith is filtered in some way. There may be a relationship between Neptune and Sagittarius. So when Neptune is Rx, you may be looking for something to believe in but looking to established philosophical sources for that inspiration, and then it doesn't work. For example, some people get into astrology to disprove it. Then they find that what they're looking for isn't scientifically provable. They're looking for an already-established answer to something that can never be answered that way.

Joanne referred her listeners to an article about Neptune on her website, www.joannewickenburg.com.

If Neptune is the umbilical cord between God and us, Pluto is the part of God that became trapped in his creation. Each of us is one piece in the collective. It's also our ultimate social destiny: we each play a role in society's evolution, contributing to the

collective consciousness. Many people think Pluto co-rules Aries and Scorpio. It's the planet of change. When Pluto is direct, we will go through a change and come out with a new identity (Aries). Pluto Rx goes through a process of personal internal identity crises before it has any understanding of how its life fits into the larger scope of things.

When inner planets go Rx or D by progression, it's a big deal because it's a change in how you're consciously living your life. When outer planets change direction, it may not be that important.

If Mercury is D at birth and turns Rx by progression, during that year something happens where you start looking at things differently. The year Venus turns D or Rx by progression, you will often see a major change in relationships, values and love issues, even if the person is very young.